

Millions eligible for tax refund

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CONCORD — State Consumer Advocate Meredith A. Hatfield is reminding New Hampshire consumers they may be eligible for a one-time refund from the IRS of the federal excise tax paid on long distance calls from Feb. 28, 2003, through May 26, 2006.

The Telephone Excise Tax Refund is available to all those who had a telephone and paid the tax during the period, regardless of whether they are required to file

a federal income tax return.

"It's almost every family in the state," Hatfield said yesterday.

Federal officials have estimated as many as 159 million individuals, businesses and nonprofits nationwide may claim the refund on their 2006 tax returns.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announced on May 25, 2006, in response to certain federal court orders, that it would stop collecting the tax. The tax was originally levied in 1898 to

help fund the Spanish-American war.

Taxpayers who elect the standard refund option fill out one more line on their regular tax return and will receive \$60 per family, or \$30 for an individual.

Taxpayers have the option of filing a Form 8913 with their tax return, if supporting payment records exist that will allow the individual to receive a refund of actual taxes paid. The tax was listed as "federal excise tax" on telephone bills.

According to the IRS, the easi-

est way for taxpayers to get their money back is to use the standard amounts.

Electing the standard amount relieves the taxpayer's of going through 41 months worth of telephone bills to determine exactly how much was paid out.

For taxpayers who do not file an income tax return, there is a new form labeled 1040EZ-T that can be used to obtain the refund.

For more information, contact the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 or go to www.irs.gov.